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Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

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And finally … it was thought that the large blue butterfly was extinct in Britain, but it seems to have made a remarkable return. The large blue, which disappeared 30 years ago, is only found in certain fields. What these fields have in common is that their grass is very short, because rabbits, sheep and cows graze there. Originally it was believed that greedy butterfly hunters had killed off the large blue butterfly, but it is now agreed that changes in farming techniques were responsible for its decline. As a result of recent efforts to protect its natural habitat, it is estimated that around 20,000 of these beautiful creatures will be seen in the British countryside this summer.

And finally, researchers believe they may have found a cure – or at least some relief – for the common cold. In tests it was reported that people who started taking zinc at the first signs of a common cold got well sooner. There have been many previous studies into the effectiveness of zinc but they were inconclusive. The new study, involving over 1,000 people of various ages, found that on average people who took zinc supplements recovered from their colds one day earlier than those who took nothing. The effectiveness of zinc in preventing a cold in the first place was less certain, although it was said that those who took it regularly suffered less serious symptoms than those who didn’t.

And finally, believe it or not, eating chocolate might be good for you after all. In the past it was thought that eating sweets would result in tooth decay and putting on weight. But now it is claimed that a new chocolate bar, invented by the world’s largest chocolate maker, can actually slow the ageing process of your skin. The special chocolate contains antioxidants, which help hydrate the skin and fight wrinkles. The market for healthy foods has grown by over five per cent a year in recent years and it seems now that even the sellers of traditionally unhealthy snacks are trying to get in on the act. However, doctors have warned against rushing out to buy extra chocolate – good skin and chocolate are not generally natural partners, they say.

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And finally, Costa Rica today has the honour of being named the world’s happiest nation. According to the latest Happy Planet Index, it is said that Costa Rica has the best balance of human well-being – that is to say, good health, a long life, low levels of poverty – and a low ecological footprint, in other words the amount of natural resources it uses. In fact, Latin American countries took nine of the top ten places, while richer, so-called developed countries, like the US at number 74, were much further down in the list.